



# ARUBA TODAY

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Aruba's English news leader and ultimate guide to paradise

Today is a great day for a visit to King Fred & Princess Diana Restaurant!

Page 8

## Supreme Court tossed out the heart of Voting Rights Act a decade ago

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY and AYANNA ALEXANDER  
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Within hours of a U.S. Supreme Court decision dismantling a key provision of the Voting Rights Act, Texas lawmakers announced plans to implement a strict voter ID law that had been blocked by a federal court. Lawmakers in Alabama said they would press forward with a similar law that had been on hold. The ruling a decade ago continues to reverberate across the country, as Republican-led states pass voting restrictions that, in several cases, would have been subject to federal review had the court left the provision intact. At the same time, the conservative-leaning court has continued to take other cases challenging elements of the landmark 1965 law. The Supreme Court weakened another section of the Voting Rights Act two years ago with a ruling in a case from Arizona.

Continued on Page 2



People wait in line outside the Supreme Court in Washington to listen to oral arguments in a voting rights case on Feb. 27, 2013.

Associated Press

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# Supreme Court tossed out the heart of Voting Rights Act a decade ago

Continued from Front

And justices are expected to rule in the coming weeks in still another case out of Alabama that could make it much more difficult for minority groups to sue over gerrymandered political maps that dilute their representation.

"At that point, you have to ask yourself what's left of the Voting Rights Act?" said Franita Tolson, a constitutional and election law expert and co-dean of the University of Southern California School of Law.

The recent wave of voting changes have been pushed by Republican lawmakers who point to concerns over elections that have been fueled by former President Donald Trump's false claims that the 2020 election was stolen.

At least 104 restrictive voting laws have been passed in 33 mostly GOP-controlled legislatures since the 2020 election, according to data analyzed by the Voting Rights Lab, which tracks voting bills in the states.

Alabama could soon add another to the list, one that would make it a crime to help a non-family member fill out or return an absentee ballot. While supporters argue the law is needed to boost security, critics say it could make it difficult for voters who are older, low-income, ill or who do not feel comfortable with



Evan Milligan, center, plaintiff in *Merrill v. Milligan*, an Alabama redistricting case that could have far-reaching effects on minority voting power across the United States, speaks with reporters following oral arguments at the Supreme Court in Washington, Oct. 4, 2022. Standing behind Milligan are Milligan's counsel Deuel Ross, from left, Letitia Jackson, Rep. Terri Sewell, D-Ala., and Janai Nelson, President and Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund.

Associated Press

the already cumbersome absentee ballot process, which includes a requirement to submit a copy of a photo ID.

"It's no different from asking me how many jellybeans are in that jar or asking me to recite the Constitution from memory," said Betty Shinn, a 72-year-old Black woman from Mobile who recently testified against the bill during a legislative hearing in Montgomery.

It was such Jim Crow-era rules that the Voting Rights Act was designed to stop, relying on a formula to

identify states, counties and towns with a history of imposing voting restrictions and with low voter registration or participation rates. They then were required to submit any proposed voting changes in advance, either to the U.S. Department of Justice or the federal court in Washington, D.C.

At the time of the 2013 Supreme Court ruling, nine states and a few dozen counties and towns in six other states were on the list for these "preclearance" federal reviews.

In the years since the decision, which came in a case filed by Shelby County, Alabama, lawmakers in the states formerly covered by the preclearance requirement have passed at least 77 voting-related laws, according to a Voting Rights Lab analysis for The Associated Press.

Most improved voter access and would have likely sailed through federal review. But at least 14 of the laws – implemented in Alabama, Arizona, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia

– added new voting restrictions, the Voting Rights Lab found. These include nine high-profile bills passed in the aftermath of the 2020 election that would have almost certainly drawn significant scrutiny from the Justice Department.

Arizona passed two measures last year requiring voters who use state and federal voter registration forms to prove their citizenship and purging voters based on whether county election officials believe they might not be citizens or qualified to vote.

For groups such as Vote.org, which focuses on voter registration and education in the states, the evolving legal landscape has meant moving quickly to update website information, retrain volunteers and revamp education material to include the latest rules and polling place information.

"It means programs like ours have to work double time, at increased expense to make sure everyone has the opportunity to vote," CEO Andrea Hailey said.

Without the preclearance process, the Justice Department and outside groups must rely on the courts to address potentially discriminatory legislation after it's already gone into effect. The Justice Department has filed legal challenges against new voting rules enacted in Texas, Georgia and Arizona since the 2020 election. □



The healthcare.gov website is seen on Dec. 14, 2021, in Fort Washington, Md.

By KEVIN MCGILL  
Associated Press

**NEW ORLEANS (AP)** — A federal appeals court in New Orleans prepared to

hear arguments Tuesday on whether insurers can be required to cover preventive health care including HIV prevention, diabetes,

## HIV protection, cancer screenings could cost more if 'Obamacare' loses latest court battle

mental health and some cancer screenings without charging patients out-of-pocket fees under former President Barack Obama's signature health care law. In the latest legal skirmish over the law that took effect 13 years ago, the Biden administration is appealing a Texas-based federal judge's ruling that would eliminate the mandate on insurers to provide no-extra-cost coverage for many types of preventive care. The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals

temporarily blocked the lower court ruling while it prepared to receive briefs and hear arguments. At issue in Tuesday afternoon's hearing before three 5th Circuit judges is whether patients should continue to have the coverage while appeals play out. An immediate ruling was not expected.

The March ruling by U.S. District Judge Reed O'Connor affected requirements for coverage driven by recommendations by the U.S. Preventive Services Task

Force. O'Connor ruled that because the task force is made up of volunteers, enforcing its recommendations violates the Constitution's Appointment Clause, which lays out how government officials can be appointed.

O'Connor, a nominee of former President George W. Bush, is the same judge who ruled more than four years ago that the entire Obama health care law was unconstitutional. That ruling was overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court. □

## LGBTQ+ Americans are under attack, Human Rights Campaign declares in state of emergency warning

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM  
Associated Press/Report for America

The Human Rights Campaign declared a state of emergency for LGBTQ+ people in the U.S. on Tuesday and released a guidebook pointing to laws it deems discriminatory in each state, along with "know your rights" information and resources to help people relocate to states with stronger LGBTQ+ protections.

Sounding the alarm about the current political climate, the nation's largest organization devoted to the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer Americans said travel advisories aren't enough to help people already living in states where lawmakers have targeted LGBTQ+ people.

"We need champions right now," HRC President Kelley Robinson said in an interview with The Associated Press. President Joe Biden and other LGBTQ+ rights supporters with decision-making authorities, she said, need to be more than just allies. The declaration is a call to action for "people in power at every level" of government and the business community, she said, urging them to fight for LGBTQ+ rights with the same fervor as they've fought for abortion rights since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade last summer. "When Dobbs fell, you saw a federal response to deal with the abortion crisis that we're in," Robinson said. "We are in a crisis of even greater scale to the health and well-being of the LGBTQ+ community, and we need that same sort of response."

Just a few days into Pride Month, the campaign said it's taking action in response to an "unprecedented and dangerous" spike in discriminatory legislation sweeping state houses this year, with more than 525 anti-LGBTQ+ bills introduced and more than



People with the Human Rights Campaign hold up "equality flags" during an event on Capitol Hill on July 26, 2017, in Washington, in support of transgender members of the military.

Associated Press

70 signed into law so far in 2023 more than double last year's number. In a report released Tuesday, it said the new laws are a result of coordinated Republican efforts, supported by "well-funded extremist groups." A recent Associated Press analysis found that many bills seeking to ban or restrict gender-affirming health care for transgender youth, who have been the primary targets of state legislation this year, sprang not from grassroots or constituent demand, but from the pens of a few powerful conservative interest groups.

The HRC guidebook, meanwhile, provides information about filing complaints for civil rights violations and points to resources for financing moves and finding employment, particularly in the 17 states with a trifecta of Democratic leadership in both legislative chambers and the governor's office. It also offers tips on how to engage in local advocacy and how to navigate tough conversations about LGBTQ+ policies with friends and family.

"The amount of calls I get every day from parents asking how they can move to another state because they'd rather mourn their home than their child is real," Robinson said. "This is

a different level of urgency and demanded a different level of response.

"The emergency declaration is the first in the 43-year history of the HRC, which encompasses a foundation focusing on research, advocacy and education, national and state lobbying campaigns and a political action committee that supports and opposes candidates for office. It comes as Republican-dominated legislatures around the country have restricted various aspects of transgender existence, from pronoun usage and bathroom access to medical care and more.□



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## Mystery client who hired detective to spy on Reno's mayor asks Nevada high court to keep name secret

By SCOTT SONNER

Associated Press

**RENO, Nev. (AP)** — The mystery client who hired a detective to secretly track Reno's mayor with a GPS device is trying to persuade Nevada's Supreme Court he has a First Amendment right to remain anonymous, a protected privilege he says is a cornerstone of democracy and part of "the business of politics."

The high court allowed lawyers representing "John Doe" to file the latest brief in the case with his true name under seal last week so as to keep his identity secret, at least for now.

Chief Justice Lidia Stiglich set additional filing deadlines into July as the justices consider an appeal the detective filed last month seeking to overturn a Washoe County judge's order that he name the person who hired him to keep tabs on Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve and a county commissioner before the November election.

John Doe's lawyers said the U.S. Supreme Court "has repeatedly affirmed that the First Amendment protects anonymous political activity."

"For better or worse ... the use of private investigators



Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve speaks during the U.S. Conference of Mayors 90th Annual Meeting at the Peppermill Resort Hotel in Reno, Nev., June 3, 2022.

Associated Press

to conduct investigations of elected officials and/or candidates is just politics as usual," they wrote in the June 1 filing.

Schieve filed a civil suit in December seeking damages from private detective David McNeely for a violation of her privacy after a mechanic alerted her to the clandestine GPS tracking device, which was attached to her vehicle.

Sparks police determined

it was purchased by McNeely. Ex-Washoe County Commissioner Vaughn Hartung joined the suit in February, alleging a GP monitor also was secretly attached to his vehicle to track his movements. The placing of the devices on the cars wasn't illegal because no Nevada law specifically outlawed the practice at the time. But the Legislature approved and Gov. Joe Lombardo

signed into law last week a prohibition on placing GPS trackers on vehicles with the exceptions of law enforcement officers with warrants and in some cases certain creditors.

Lawyers for McNeely said in last month's appeal to the state's high court that divulging the name of a client would violate the long-accepted and expected confidentiality of a "private investigator-client relation-

ship."

Lawyers for John Doe joined the appeal last week, arguing that the First Amendment protects John Doe's right to anonymously investigate elected officials to help uncover misconduct or malfeasance.

"Anonymous pamphlets leaflets, brochures and even books have played an important role in the progress of mankind. Persecuted groups and sects from time to time throughout history have been able to criticize oppressive practices and laws either anonymously or not at all," said the brief filed by Las Vegas lawyers Alina Shell and Jeffrey Barr.

"Even the Federalist Papers, written in favor of the adoption of our Constitution, were published under fictitious names," they said. They said that without the assurance of confidentiality, Doe wouldn't have hired the detective to investigate any alleged misconduct by the politicians. They said earlier he'd received information that suggested the officials may have been involved in some sort of wrongdoing but haven't provided any further details. □

## Too many people in NYC are searched and frisked illegally

By LARRY NEUMEISTER

Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — New York City's reliance on the tactic known as "stop and frisk"

as part of a new initiative to combat gun violence is harming communities of color and running afoul of the law, a court-appointed

federal monitor reported Monday.

Monitor Mylan Denerstein said the NYPD's Neighborhood Safety Teams special units deployed in the past 14 months to seize guns in high-crime areas were engaging in "unconstitutional policing" by stopping and frisking too many people without justification.

In one police precinct, Denerstein said, only 41 percent of stops, 32 percent of frisks and 26 percent of searches were lawful.

The Neighborhood Safety Teams, a replacement for the anti-crime units that the NYPD disbanded in 2021, operate in 34 areas

that account for 80% of the city's violent crime largely in communities of color. Of the people the teams have stopped, Denerstein said, 97% are Black or Hispanic.

A spokesperson for Mayor Eric Adams said city officials "have serious concerns" with Denerstein's methodology and that they only learned of her findings after news outlets reported on them.

The spokesperson, Fabien Levy, said shootings have fallen since the Neighborhood Safety Teams were created.

Officers assigned to the units "have enhanced training and oversight to

ensure we are not only keeping New Yorkers safe, but protecting their civil liberties as well," Levy said, adding that "any unconstitutional stop is unacceptable, and we will strive to do better for New Yorkers every day."

Denerstein said she began her review after Adams announced in March 2022 that the NYPD was deploying Neighborhood Safety Teams in some precincts to combat gun violence. Team members, wearing modified uniforms and driving unmarked cars, conduct stops, frisks and searches in their assigned neighborhoods. □



NYPD officers patrol the surrounding areas at Rockefeller Center in New York on Dec. 19, 2019.

Associated Press

# Ukraine brands Russia 'terrorist state' at top U.N. court

By MIKE CORDER

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands

(AP) — Lawyers for Ukraine told the United Nations' top court Tuesday that Russia bankrolled a "campaign of intimidation and terror" by rebels in eastern Ukraine starting in 2014 and sought to replace Crimea's multiethnic community with "discriminatory Russian nationalism" after its occupation and annexation of the region.

The claims came at hearings at the International Court of Justice in a case brought by Kyiv against Russia linked to Moscow's 2014 annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and the arming of rebels in eastern Ukraine in the years before Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022.

Ukraine wants the world court to order Moscow to pay reparations for attacks and crimes in the regions, including for the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 that was shot down by Russia-backed rebels on July 17, 2014, killing all 298 passengers and crew.

Four days of hearings in the court's ornate, wood-paneled Great Hall of Justice opened against a back-



Presiding judge Joan Donoghue, center, and other judges enter the World Court in The Hague, Netherlands, Tuesday, June 6, 2023.

Associated Press

drop of Europe's deadliest conflict since World War II. Ukraine and Russia were trading accusations of blame for the damage to the Kakhovka dam and hydroelectric power station, which are located in a part of Ukraine that Moscow controls.

Lawyers for Kyiv presented legal arguments to support their case Tuesday. Russia's lawyers will address judges Thursday. Each side has another opportunity next

week to present evidence. Judges are expected to take months to issue a judgment.

"When it could have instructed its officials not to fund groups committing violence against civilians, Russia did nothing," Harold Koh, a lawyer for Ukraine, told judges. "Instead, as more deadly weapons arrived in Ukraine and more Ukrainian civilians suffered atrocities, Russian officials escalated their illegal sup-

ply of monies and weapons sending."

Koh said that in July 2014, a Buk anti-aircraft system was sent into Ukraine "after which Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 was destroyed."

Another lawyer on Ukraine's team, David Zions, said that pro-Russia forces in eastern Ukraine "attacked civilians as part of a campaign of intimidation and terror. Russian money and weapons fueled this cam-

paign."

The Ukrainian legal team said Russia did nothing to prevent or help Ukraine investigate the financial streams.

Turning to alleged breaches in Crimea of a convention to combat racial discrimination, Koh said that, following its illegal occupation and annexation of the peninsula, Russia "sought to replace the multiethnic community that had characterized Crimea before Russia's intervention with discriminatory Russian nationalism."

He told judges that Russian policies amount to "a long-term project to erase the rights and culture that make Ukraine a proud, multi-ethnic nation, to wipe out what makes Ukrainians Ukrainians and what makes the Crimean Tatars, Crimean Tatars."

The case is one of several legal proceedings against Russia linked to Ukraine.

In a separate case brought by Ukraine in the immediate aftermath of Russia's illegal invasion, the world court issued a preliminary order calling on Russia to stop hostilities a legally binding ruling that Moscow ignored. □

# Report says 2.3B people globally use polluting fuel to cook

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Up to 2.3 billion people around the world are still using polluting fuels to cook and 675 million don't have electricity, according to a report released Tuesday by five international organizations. The report said that at current rates, 660 million people are projected to be without electricity and 1.9 billion won't have clean cooking opportunities by 2030. That's the target date to achieve a United Nations goal set in 2015 "to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all."

The report by the International Energy Agency, International Renewable

Energy Agency, U.N. Statistics Division, World Bank and World Health Organization said that at the midway point toward the goal, the world is not on track to reach the energy target,

which will negatively impact the health of millions and accelerate climate change.

"The energy crisis sparked by Russia's invasion of Ukraine continues to have

a profound impact on people all around the world," International Energy Agency Executive Director Fatih Birol said in a statement. "High energy prices have hit the most vulnerable hard, particularly those in developing economies."

He said that while the transition to clean energy is happening faster than people think, a great deal of work is still needed to provide it to the billions still living without it. According to the report, global access to electricity increased from 84% in 2010 to 91% in 2021, but the pace of growth slowed in 2019-2021, which includes the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the elec-



A farmer tills his land under power lines near central China's Henan province on Oct. 23, 2021.

Associated Press

trification of rural areas contributed to progress, there is still a large gap in urban areas, it said. More than 80% of those without electricity 567 million in 2021 lived in sub-Saharan Africa, similar to the deficit in 2010, it said. The report also found that up to 2.3 billion people still use polluting fuels and technologies, including firewood. Francesco La Camera, director-general of the International Renewable Energy Agency, said: "Cost-competitive renewable energy has yet again demonstrated remarkable resilience, but the poorest in the world are still largely unable to fully benefit from it." □

## OpenAI CEO suggests international agency could oversee AI

By JON GAMBRELL

Associated Press

**ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP) —** Artificial intelligence poses an “existential risk” to humanity, a key innovator warned during a visit to the United Arab Emirates on Tuesday, suggesting an international agency like the International Atomic Energy Agency oversee the ground-breaking technology.

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman is on a global tour to discuss artificial intelligence.

“We face serious risk. We face existential risk,” said Altman, 38. “The challenge that the world has is how we’re going to manage those risks and make sure we still get to enjoy those tremendous benefits. No one wants to destroy the world.”

OpenAI’s ChatGPT, a popular chatbot, has grabbed the world’s attention as it offers essay-like answers to prompts from users. Microsoft has invested some \$1 billion in OpenAI.

ChatGPT’s success, offering a glimpse into the way that artificial intelligence could change the way that humans work and learn, has sparked concerns as well. Hundreds of industry lead-



OpenAI CEO Sam Altman speaks in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, Tuesday, June 6, 2023.

Associated Press

ers, including Altman, have signed a letter in May that warns “mitigating the risk of extinction from AI should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war.”

Altman made a point to reference the IAEA, the United Nations nuclear watchdog, as an example of how the world came together to oversee nuclear power. That agency was created in the years after the U.S.

dropping atom bombs on Japan at the end of World War II. “Let’s make sure we come together as a globe and I hope this place can play a real role in this,” Altman said. “We talk about the IAEA as a model where the world has said ‘OK, very dangerous technology, let’s all put some guard rails.’ And I think we can do both. “I think in this case, it’s a nuanced message ‘cause it’s saying it’s not that dangerous today but

it can get dangerous fast. But we can thread that needle.”

Lawmakers around the world also are examining artificial intelligence. The 27-nation European Union is pursuing an AI Law that could become the de facto global standard for artificial intelligence. Altman told the U.S. Congress in May that government intervention will be critical to governing the risks that come with AI.

But the UAE, an autocratic federation of seven hereditarily ruled sheikhdoms, offers the flip side of the risks of AI. Speech remains tightly controlled. Rights groups warn the UAE and other states across the Persian Gulf regularly use spying software to monitor activists, journalists and others. Those restrictions affect the flow of accurate information the same details AI programs like ChatGPT rely on as machine-learning systems to provide their answers for users.

Among speakers opening for Altman at the event at the Abu Dhabi Global Market was Andrew Jackson, the CEO of the Inception Institute of AI, which is described as a company of G42. G42 is tied to Abu Dhabi’s powerful national security adviser and deputy ruler Sheikh Tahnoun bin Zayed Al Nahyan. G42’s CEO is Peng Xiao, who for years ran Pegasus, a subsidiary of DarkMatter, an Emirati security firm under scrutiny for hiring former CIA and NSA staffers, as well as others from Israel. G42 also owns a video and voice calling app that reportedly was a spying tool for the Emirati government. □

## 4.9 magnitude quake strikes southern Haiti

By EVENS SANON and DÁNICA COTO  
Associated Press

**PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) —** An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 4.9 struck southern Haiti early Tuesday, killing at least four people and injuring 36 others, authorities said. The quake struck before dawn near the southwestern coastal city of Jeremie at a depth of six miles (10 kilometers), according to the U.S. Geological Survey. “I thought the whole house was going to fall on top of me,” Eric Mpitabakana, a World Food Program official in Jeremie, told The Associated Press by phone.

Two homes collapsed in the quake, and a key route that connects Jeremie and Les Cayes was blocked, according to Haiti’s Civil Protection Agency. Three of the people who died were found under a collapsed house where rescuers were searching for more people, Frankel Maginaire, with Haiti’s Civil Protection Agency in Jeremie told the AP.

He said that several children were hospitalized with injuries they received after they panicked and ran.

A crowd of people gathered around one home that collapsed as they tried to search for survivors in the

rubble. They carried out at least one victim wrapped in a sheet. Mpitabakana said things fell around his house and that he and other colleagues are contemplating sleeping outdoors if there are strong aftershocks. “There were so many people out on the street, and a lot of panic,” he recalled of the moments after the quake struck.

Claude Prepetit, a geologist and engineer with Haiti’s Bureau of Mines and Energy, told Radio Caraibes that smaller earthquakes that occurred earlier this year in southern Haiti led to the bigger one that struck Tuesday. The earthquake



People carry an injured person away from a home that collapsed due to an earthquake in Jeremie, Haiti, Tuesday, June 6, 2023.

Associated Press

struck almost two years after a 7.2 magnitude earthquake struck southern Haiti and killed more than 2,200 people, with Les Cayes sustaining the most damage. Some people who lost their homes last August are still living in camps. Allen Joseph, a program

## The Savaneta Neighborhood Center is going to celebrate Dera Gay

(Oranjestad)—Vanessa de Kort, project leader at the Savaneta Neighborhood Center, has informed that on June 24th, they will be celebrating Dera Gay\* at the neighborhood center to continue enriching the culture of Aruba.

The evening will begin at 6:00 PM and culminate at 10:00 PM with musical performances by Frank Croes and his Tipico Pega Saya, Masiduri dance group, Nos Cultura group, and as a special guest, Ivy and her group. Additionally, there will be Dera Gay competitions in the categories of children, youth, and adults. At the same time, they will also have a competition for the best Dera Gay attire. The purpose of this evening is to enhance the culture of Aruba. De Kort expressed the intention of revitalizing the neighborhood center, which has seen a significant decrease in activities since the Covid-19 pandemic. She mentioned that they want to restore the neighborhood center's function. "We have already started with a few volleyball competitions. Savaneta is known for its volleyball and indoor soccer. The groups that were always there were Savaneta Six Stars, La Fama, Racket Club, and all those groups that had already established themselves. Now, we want to bring back the more recreational aspect that made Savaneta great in the 60s, 70s, and 80s."

The intention is also to raise funds to renovate the neighborhood center. The stage, which is from the



1930s and has served as a theater, has lost its name and importance in recent years. De Kort mentioned that they want to bring it back and restore it not only for theater but also for dance, singing, and other activities.

De Kort emphasized that the costs for restoring the stage require a significant amount of money, and they have not yet made a budget for it. Nevertheless, they are aware that it is something that requires sufficient funding.

Furthermore, they are planning to organize more activities to restore the soccer and volleyball fields. The roof of the venue also needs attention, as there are many things that require repairs.

De Kort made a call to the residents, requesting active volunteers who are willing to participate and contrib-



ute to the work and effort

needed for these activities. Registration to participate in the Dera Gay event is free, as mentioned by De Kort. Those interested can contact her at (+297) 594 4570.

Dera Gay is a celebration with various origins and histories. The cultural festival of San Juan (St. John the Baptist), known locally as Dera Gay, dates back to 1862 and is celebrated every year on June 24th. The origin story of this religious and cultural festival has several versions.

The religious origin is associated with the birth date of St. John the Baptist, while the cultural origin is tied to the harvest festival. Although it has a religious aspect, Dera Gay is predominantly recognized as a cultural festival featuring music, dance, and singing. The dominant colors are red and yellow. Yellow symbolizes the flowering kibrahacha tree, while red represents the candle that is lit on the eve to announce the festival of the following

day. According to tradition, the festival begins on June 23rd when people light cornstalks as a symbolic cleansing to prepare for the new harvest season. On June 24th, after sunset, the celebration of San Juan starts in different districts with Dera

Gay dance, candle dance, and flag dance. The candle dance is performed for protection against illness and bad luck. The most well-known dance is the Dera Gay, where a man, with his eyes covered and a stick in his hand, attempts to kill the "gay" (rooster). Previously, this dance took place in open fields with a live rooster.

Today, a dummy is used, and the dance takes place in clubs. Those who still perform the dance in the fields or on the ground use a calabash. There is also a flag dance, where small flags are placed on the ground, and a person with their eyes covered by a cloth searches for the flags. The ceremony is accompanied by folk music.

The prominent musical instruments are the fio, wiri, and tambu. The Dera Gay chant dates back to 1862. Of course, this celebration is not complete without traditional local food and drinks. The festival of San Juan and Dera Gay regained popularity in the 1970s among the local population, and schools also started paying attention to this popular festival. "San Juan is coming, San Juan is going."

\*Dera Gay: The word "gay" in Papiamento means "rooster", and is pronounced like "guy". □



## Today is a great day for a visit to King Fred & Princess Diana Restaurant!



This unique restaurant situated in Aruba's only Dutch windmill is definitely worth a visit. With the essence of the Netherlands combined with the warmth of Aruba, you are in for a real Royal treat.

### Breakfast with Princess Diana

Do you want to start your day with the most mouth-watering pancakes? What are you waiting for? Take a stroll until the end of the strip where you will find the one and only Dutch windmill on the island! Walk in, take a

seat and have yourself a Royal treat. The staff will welcome you with the biggest smile and make sure that you feel right at home. There you can choose from a great variety of Dutch pancakes with fresh fruits, sweet & salty pancakes or just regular ones which you can personalize with an extra side of fresh fruits, bacon or just plain yoghurt with the option to add banana to the yoghurt. And for the kids there is a special option of 5 little smiley pancakes with sprinkles. Combine your breakfast with a hot and strong coffee of choice: from



Dutch coffee, espresso or double espresso to a nice and rich latte or cappuccino. Also tea and hot chocolate with whipped cream are on the famous menu. Or, you can just go wild and ask for one of the most delicious Special Coffees. Cold drinks are also available! Frappe, Iced coffee, sodas and juices, but also mimosas, prosecco and of course, Bloody Mary to wipe out the bloody hangover from the night before.

### Dinner with King Fred

From 5pm - 9.30pm you can take your wildest ride with the most popular chicken dishes on the island! Kick start the night with a bowl of soup or an appetizer to tickle your palate. Chicken with foie gras ravioli, chicken cheeser or King Fred's famous chicken salad with apple, walnuts, parmesan cheese and sweet & sour dressing are part of the appetizer menu.

### Main dishes

King Fred is all about chicken and chicken only. Not just chicken but, Fred's chicken! On the menu you have an array of chicken dishes like Drunk chicken, prepared in red wine and served with mashed potatoes and mushrooms; Chicken parmesan and pasta smothered in a rich tomato sauce; Indian chicken served with rice, potatoes, green beans & curry masala sauce; Italian chicken pot pie with spinach, mushrooms and creamy Italian sauce under a puff pastry sheet; chicken truffle tagliatelle pasta with chicken and creamy truffle sauce; a juicy Chicken burger prepared with our homemade spice mix on a slice of brioche bread with bacon strips, onions, mushrooms, lettuce, Gouda cheese, piccalilli mayonnaise, French fries & coleslaw.

It's been said that Fred's chickens are the ones to die for!

Compliment your dish with a side of your choice and voila..!

For the meat and fish lovers, ask your waiter for the options because we love you too.

### Drinks

The drink menu is carefully selected with the most popular cocktails, wines and beers.

After dinner you can enjoy one of the delicious special made coffees or after dinner cocktails, or you can hop upstairs to Fransjes Bar by Frans, who is a well-known bartender in the Aruban hospitality industry. He will serve you cold drinks and a great view for a reasonable price.

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our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. For today we received a lovely message from **Mike and Donna DuBrink** from New Jersey.

They wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is the fountain of youth. My husband and I are 76 and 69 years old. We have been coming to Aruba yearly since 1993. We reconnect with our younger selves on the



beautiful beaches and soaking in the salt water."

wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □

Thank you for sending us this

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Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from one of our lovely visitors.

They wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is "Love". We have met so many wonderful lifetime friends ~ Tourists and Islanders that we can't wait to see every year"

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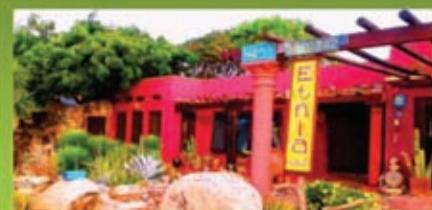
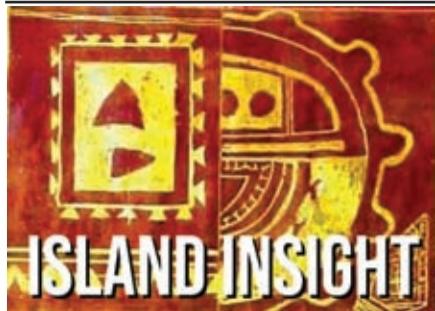
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## "Seida" an Aruban medicinal plant

Aruba is a highly demanded tourist destination with a fragile ecosystem on a very small piece of earth, but it has thousands of years of human history and millions in geological terms. Our native heritage teaches us to love and respect our roots, and our greatest desire is to protect and preserve them. Here is where the objective of this blog comes to mind: educating our readers about Aruba's cultural heritage.

The use of plants for medicine dates back to ancient civilizations, and their use were also common during the Middle Ages. During the 19th and 20th centuries, popular knowledge of medicinal plants was passed from generation to generation, the practice being attributed mainly to women healers, who applied plants and herbs to treat common diseases and ailments.

Plants were considered the main source from which to extract healing powers due to their chemical compositions contained in their leaves, flowers, stem or root, fruits and sap. While for thousands of years, the cultures of the ancient world experimented with the healing power of plants. Today we see that medicinal plants and ancestral knowledge are an intricate part of pharmaceutical research, whether for the benefit of humanity or the contrary.

Restoring life powers and health is essential to the survival of any group. Through different methods of preparation, potions are prepared that in many cases are still applied to treat various ailments. This could be anything from a simple headache to more serious ailments.

For an infusion, the active ingredients of the plant are dissolved in water by boiling it in to a drink. If it needs to be applied to an external affected area, the part of the plant that contains the healing properties is crushed and applied. A direct way to ingest certain medicinal herbs is to eat them, for example, in a sal-



ad, like a tea or mixed into a syrups or honey. Plants can also be mashed in to a mortar mixed with oils of certain seeds in order to be applied on wounds or skin diseases.

In Aruba, a wide variety of medicinal plants have been applied to treat diseases by our ancestors and that we currently continue to use, such as the leaf sap and roots of Seida to relieve sore throats or skin problems\* *Jatropha gossypiifolia*. The roots are cleaned and boiled using the water, once it has cooled down, as a gargle. Results are immediately and are excellent, achieving great relief from the uncomfortable sore throat.

*Jatropha gossypiifolia*, commonly known as "seida" is a species of flowering plant in the spurge family, Euphorbiaceae. This species is most commonly found in drier tropical environments, but is sometimes also naturalized in subtropical and semi-arid regions. It is a weed of degraded pastures, open woodlands, monsoon vine forests, grasslands, riparian vegetation, coastal foreshores,



roadsides, disturbed sites, waste areas and old or abandoned gardens.

The species is native to Mexico, South America, Gujarat State (India) and the Caribbean islands. It grows to 2.5 to 4 m high. The three lobed leaves are purple and sticky when young and become bright green with age. The small red flowers with yellow centers appear in clusters. There are many common names for *Jatropha gossypiifolia* including: bellyache-bush, black physic nut, and cotton-leaf physic nut cotton-leaf jatropha or wild cassava in English, pinon negro, pinon colorado, and tua-tua in Spanish; medicinier noir and medicinier rouge in French; mamoninha and peao-roxo in Brazil, etc.

Another plant that is often used for asthma is *Datura metel*, commonly known in our Papiamento language as "Yerba Stinki \*". Oddly enough, the popular story tells that the leaves of this plant are smoked to cleanse the lungs.

Now, if you love to know everything about Aruba, do something off the "tourist grid" and surprise yourself by visiting Etnia Nativa, a private residential museum and unique place that introduces you to an authentic glimpse of the island's native cultural heritage.



Since 1994, Etnia Nativa has been the home of Anthony, a native artist and "Island-Insight" blogger who guides each visitor through resplendent collections from his family heritage dating back to 1640, when the Dutch occupation began. Visit it, feel the true native effect and surprised with his top Aruba's level knowledge!

R.S.V.P. WhatsApp +297 592 2702 or mail etnianativa03@gmail.com. □

## Episode CCIX - 209

## Food culture in Aruba

**(Oranjestad)** - Like many other cultures, an important aspect of the Aruban cultural identity is our connection to food and food traditions. The local food traditions consist of a melting pot of different cultural and religious eating habits and dishes.

### Breakfast, lunch and dinner

The routine of breakfast, lunch and dinner on the island is one that does not completely follow a European or American routine, despite the major influences from these parts of the world on our culture and way of living. When it comes to the three important meals of the day, most of the Aruban population follows a Latin-American influenced routine.

### Breakfast

Breakfast in Aruba is quite simple: a cup of coffee or tea, some bread, and sometimes an egg. Sometimes, due to the need of a quick "to-go" breakfast, you may also find many snack trucks and cafes that sell sandwiches, pastechis (meat pie), arepas and empanadas early in the morning.

### Main Meal

The main meal is typically eaten in most households around noon or in the afternoon. This can consist of meat, fish, and chicken—stewed or fried—with funchi (polenta) or rice with stewed vegetables. Often, fried or boiled plantain or pan bati (Aruban pancake) is included. Stews are a staple in Aruban cuisine and can be largely influenced by Latin-American and Latin/Afro-Caribbean Stews. Some of the more unique stews and soups from the ABC Islands\* include sopi di bonchi cora (red kidney bean soup with pig tail), sopi mondongo (tripe soup), carni stoba (beef stew), comcomber stoba (West Indian gherkin stew) and much more.

### Dinner Time

Dinner time can vary significantly from household to household. Unlike the U.S.



or in Europe, dinner time typically does not consist of a whole (warm) meal. Instead, the evening "meal" can typically consist of something lighter, like a sandwich, though it is not uncommon to see leftovers from the main meal reheated and eaten again. Tea and coffee are often also served with the evening snack.

### (Religious) Holidays

Christmas is probably the biggest global holiday, and every culture has its own spin on what their Christmas cuisine entails. In Aruba, our Christmas cuisine is again largely based on Latin-

American influences, most notably from Venezuela. Ayacas and the famous pan di ham\* are two crucial holiday dishes, along with stuffed turkey, roasted glazed ham topped with pineapples, arroz con pollo (rice and chicken) and potato salad, among other items. Traditional drinks in-



clude ponche crema (Aruban eggnog), chuculati pinda (hot chocolate with peanut butter), and homemade fruit punch. Desserts include, bolo di pistachio (pistachio cake), bolo di cashupete (cashew cake), quesillo (flan), bolo preto (dark fruit cake), drigidek (gingerbread), pan boyo (bread cake) and more.

### Snacks and tasty delights

Besides meals and dishes that are eaten on the dinner table, Aruba also has a food tradition that includes snacks and other tasty delights that you may easily find around the island. These include, Saco\*, basket, pastechi, kroket, deditos, Johnny cake and more. These snacks are usually sold at local snack trucks and cafes, often located on the side of the road. In the area of Tanki Leendert and Tanki flip, for example, there are many of these trucks parked on the side of the road and often open until late at night—offering tasty and filling snacks post night-life fun.

### \*ABC Islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao

\*Pan di ham: Derived from the Venezuelan Pan de Jamon (rolled up bread with ham, raisins and olives)

\*Saco: Saco literally means "bag". Saco contains fried potatoes, plantains, chicken (and ribs) and a Johnny cake, served in a paper bag.

Source: Voeding, voedingsgewoonten en gerechten op Aruba (Nutrition, Food Traditions and Dishes on Aruba) by Biblioteca Nacional Aruba □

**CROSSWORD**

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 46 Jug part

1 Light wind

7 Flight part DOWN

11 Crashed 1 Lingerie  
into buy12 Do a KP 2 Mob  
chore pariah

13 Apparel 3 CPR

14 Gumbo 4 expert  
veggie15 Taste bud 5 Gives off  
locale17 Play parts 6 Blissful  
20 Honshu place

23 Meadow 7 Better half

24 TV studio 8 Go by  
equipment train

26 Noah's 9 Blunder

27 In the 10 Soup bit

28 Tick off 11 Lose it

29 Ticked off 12 Disconcert

31 River 13—

32 Throw 14—

33 Sampras 15—

34 Phone 16—

37 Locks 17—

39 Revenue 18—

43 Lends a 19—

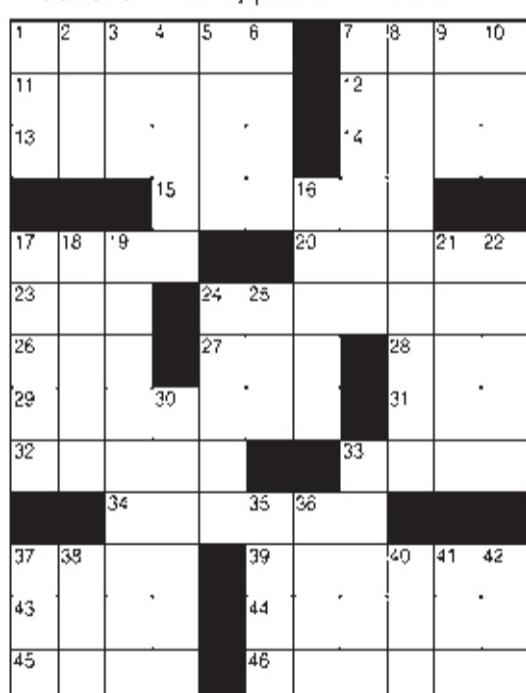
44 Justice 20—

45 Apple or 21—

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Yesterday's answer

19	Have a	33	Praline
5	Binary	private	nut
6	digit	word with	35 School
21	Gold	member	
7	Blissful	unit	36 Cuzzo
8	place	22 Know-it-	native
9	Better half	all's	37 Topper
10	Go by	challenge	38 Melody
11	train	24 Caravan	40 Unoriginal
12	Blunder	carrier	41 Singer
13	Soup bit	17 Disconcert	25 Hoppy
14	Lose it	26	Tormé
15	Disconcert	blanche	18—
16	27	brew	42 Language
17	brew	30 Opposed	suffix
18	blanche		



6-7

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

6-7 CRYPTOQUOTE

G B Y C K G B Q P I H U ' M B T U U C

G M P E T K X N T H M V Q M S T Q , I U X

M O I M G H T U I R R Q J M I V K Q ,

— R I S S G Q B G H O Q S

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: SOME PEOPLE ONLY ASK OTHERS TO DO SOMETHING. I BELIEVE THAT. WHY SHOULD I WAIT FOR SOMEONE ELSE?  
— MALALA YOUSAFZAI

## Banks' growing reliance on chatbots worries consumer watchdog



Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Director Rohit Chopra, speaks from the South Court Auditorium on the White House complex in Washington, April 11, 2022.

Associated Press

By KEN SWEET

AP Business Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Can you trust Erica, or Sandi or Amy to increasingly control parts of your financial life without giving you inaccurate information or sending money to the wrong place?

That's what the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is asking in a report released Tuesday, where the bureau lays out a number of concerns about the growing use of chatbots by banks to handle routine customer service requests. The CFPB worries that banks or loan-servicing companies may cut back on human customer service employees and push an increasing number of routine tasks to AI. Further, the regulator says poorly designed chatbots could run afoul of federal laws that govern how debts are collected or how personal information is being used.

"If firms poorly deploy these services, there's a lot of risk for widespread customer harm," said Rohit Chopra, director of the CFPB, in an interview with The Associated Press.

For several years, banks have been handling more and more customer service requests with chatbots, often with female-sounding names like Sandi for Santander, Amy from HSBC, or Eno at Capital

One. Bank of America runs the biggest and most successful financial chatbot under the Erica brand. Erica the last five letters in America now handles hundreds of millions of inquiries a year from BofA's customers. Initially bank chatbots were used to for basic inquiries, like changing a customers' address or phone number, or telling a customer where the nearest branch is or what the routing number might be on their account. But as banks have invested millions into these services, chatbots have gotten especially sophisticated, able to understand full sentences or even help a customer move money around or pay a bill.

The CFPB estimates that roughly four out of every 10 Americans interacted with a bank chatbot last year, a figure they expect will grow.

Banks are getting ready to roll out even more advanced AI-like services. □

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Alcoholics Anonymous  
 Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous  
 Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia  
 Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes  
 Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention  
 Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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# Who let the beasts out? New 'Transformers' tries but fails to energize the saga

By MARK KENNEDY  
AP Entertainment Writer

With the "Transformers" franchise clearly at a crossroads, its latest protectors have turned to their deep bench of characters. But just adding more robots won't transform this tired series.

"Transformers: Rise of the Beasts" returns the franchise to its galaxy-wide self-importance after taking a nice detour with 2018's smaller "Bumblebee." We have a new cast of animal robots and a very evil enemy in the planet-eating Unicron, but they're not used right and the movie limps from fight to fight.

The key to the film is actually a key, some sort of ancient glowing shaft that will open a portal in space and time. Everyone wants it to go home, to kill planets or to save planets. The audience may also want to use it to beam into a more interesting movie.

Directed by Steven Caple Jr. using a screenplay by Darnell Metayer, Erich Hoeber, Jon Hoeber and Josh Peters based on a story by Joby Harold "Transformers: Rise of the Beasts" is a big swing that seems to portend a multi-film arc nestled in time after "Bumblebee" and before the first live-action "Transformers" movie. The problem with "Transformers: Rise of the Beasts" is the same problem faced by all of the installments



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Optimus Primal, Cheetor, Wheeljack and Arcee in a scene from "Transformers: Rise of the Beasts."

Associated Press

balancing the humanity with the metal. "Bumblebee" got the ratios right by bringing the machine down to size.

But a wide gulf between the humans and the giant space robots immediately appears in the new movie, with Optimus Prime being his classic, anal drill sergeant self "If we are to die, then we will die as one," he'll intone. As the movie stutters on, the robots seem to soften only when the beasts show up for the last third they mourn, get angry, feel protective, love even.

The filmmakers also have tried to bridge the divide with none other than Pete Davidson, who voices the juvenile robot Mirage, a wisecracking, fist-bumping silver Porsche 911 with a

less rigid way of expression: "Don't mess with my boy!" and "Prime, you got to learn how to relax, my man." It mostly works best line: "I'm not scared. That's just engine oil!" but Davidson seems trapped inside that steel.

The special effects are astounding but sometimes numbing at the same time. The beasts especially a nostril-flaring gorilla are gorgeously realized and the baddies look cool as they control elements in space and time, like building sky walkways as they move on them.

Setting the movie in 1994 gives the filmmakers some vintage fun, like adding beepers and references to O.J. Simpson, plus a soundtrack including A Tribe Called Quest and LL

Cool J. But even here they get stuff wrong, like using Biggie's "Hypnotize," which came out in 1996, and having a character sing "Waterfalls" by TLC a year before it came out.

The Autobots are represented by Optimus Prime (voiced by veteran Peter Cullen), Bumblebee and Arcee (voiced by Liza Koshy). Then there are the Terrorcons, led by Scourge (Peter Dinklage), who controls swarms of horrifying insect robots and says things like: "Rip the flesh from their bones."

On the puny human side, Anthony Ramos plays an ex-military electronics expert from Brooklyn named Noah, who has a sick younger brother Dean Scott Vazquez, the best actor of the bunch and is

tempted to criminality to get him proper care. On his first heist, he accidentally gets into Mirage and, after an excellent high-speed chase, meets the rest of the Autobots.

Looking for the portal key, he meets Elena, played by Dominique Fishback, a museum intern with an astonishing ability to recognize everything from a fake Leonardo da Vinci painting to an Nubian sculpture even though she's never been outside New York. Soon she'll be roaming ancient tombs in Peru like Indiana Jones.

Real-life friends Ramos and Fishback have talked about their chemistry, but none of it made it onto the screen. Just like the robots, their scenes are overly heightened and overacted, like an intense bubble of distilled humanity between giant robot fights. It's not clear even what their relationship is more siblings? Would-be-lovers?

Much too late come the titular stars of the show the beasts. There's Optimus Primal, a 13-foot-tall metallic silverback gorilla voiced by Ron Perlman; Cheetor, a cheetah the size of a small truck voiced by Tongayi Chirisa; Airazor, a peregrine falcon who shoots fire, voiced by Michelle Yeoh; and Rhinox, a battering ram on legs, voiced by David Sobolov. The film comes to life with them. □



Roger Waters performs at Barclays Arena in Hamburg, Germany, on Sunday, May 7, 2023, to kick off his "This Is Not A Drill" tour of Germany.

Associated Press

By MATTHEW LEE  
AP Diplomatic Writer  
**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Biden administration is

weighing in on the controversy over Pink Floyd co-founder Roger Waters, saying his recent perfor-

## U.S. weighs in on Roger Waters antisemitism debate

mances in Germany were antisemitic, an assessment shared by many in Israel and the pro-Israel community. The State Department said Tuesday that Waters has "a long track record of using antisemitic tropes" and a concert he gave late last month in Germany "contained imagery that is deeply offensive to Jewish people and minimized the Holocaust."

The comments came in a written response to a ques-

tion posed at Monday's State Department press briefing about whether the administration agreed with criticism of Rogers from the U.S. special envoy to combat antisemitism, Deborah Lipstadt.

"Special Envoy Lipstadt's quote-tweet speaks for itself," the department said. "The concert in question, which took place in Berlin, contained imagery that is deeply offensive to Jewish people and minimized

the Holocaust," the department said. "The artist in question has a long track record of using antisemitic tropes to denigrate Jewish people." In a May 24 tweet after the concert in Berlin, during which Waters appeared on stage in a costume reminiscent of Nazi-era Germany, Lipstadt denounced the musician by echoing comments from EU antisemitism envoy Katharina von Schnurbein, who is German. □

# Djokovic perfect in key tiebreaker in French Open win

By HOWARD FENDRICH

AP Tennis Writer

**PARIS (AP)** — Novak Djokovic, in his words, felt "quite sluggish, quite slow" for nearly two full sets against Karen Khachanov in the the French Open quarterfinals Tuesday.

Afterward, Djokovic called it his worst stretch of the tournament, a fair assessment. He dropped the opening set, something he hadn't done at Roland Garros this year. As the second went to a tiebreaker in Court Philippe Chatrier, he knew it was vital to step up his game, bring forth his best.

It's one thing to seek perfection; it's another entirely to deliver. As if merely wanting so made it so, Djokovic did what he's done before at crucial moments over the years en route to 22 Grand Slam titles.

Managing to choose the right shot every time, managing to put each ball precisely where he intended, Djokovic threw a shutout of a tiebreaker to point himself toward what would become a 4-6, 7-6 (0), 6-2, 6-4 victory over the 11th-seeded Khachanov.

Djokovic, who could meet No. 1 Carlos Alcaraz in the semifinals, found one word to describe that segment of the match: "Amazing." Alcaraz, who beat Djokovic on clay at the Madrid Masters last year in their only previous encounter, was



Serbia's Novak Djokovic serves against Russia's Karen Khachanov during their quarterfinal match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris, Tuesday, June 6, 2023.

scheduled to meet No. 5 Stefanos Tsitsipas in the last men's quarterfinal Tuesday night.

No. 2 seed Aryna Sabalenka and unseeded Karolina Muchova both reached the women's semifinals by winning earlier in the day. Sabalenka, the reigning champion at the Australian Open, eliminated Elina Svitolina 6-4, 6-4, then appeared at a news conference for the first time in nearly a week. Muchova defeated 2021 runner-up Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 7-5, 6-2.

How does Djokovic approach a tiebreaker?

"It's kind of a mentality of (locking down): 'OK, I'm present, I'm focused only on the next point and I have to really think clearly about what I want to do against ... a given opponent. It worked really well for me,'" said Djokovic, a 36-year-old from Serbia who has spent more weeks ranked No. 1 than anyone in his sport's history and is currently No. 3. "It worked really well for me."

Well, there's an understatement.

"Every point was perfectly scripted for me, so to say. Yeah, sometimes it works; sometimes it doesn't," he

said. "I was lucky that, throughout my career, I have a very good and positive score in the tiebreaks. My opponents know that, and I know that. So, I think, mentally that serves me well."

Indeed, he is 307-162, a winning percentage of .655, in those set-deciders now played at 6-all at every major. In 2023, it's 14-4, including 5-0 in Paris. And get this: Those tiebreakers at the 2023 French Open have been comprised of 47 total points and he has made a grand total of zero unforced errors.

On an 80-degree after-

noon, Djokovic brought that brand of make-no-mistakes tennis to the next set, too, against Khachanov, a semifinalist at the U.S. Open last September and the Australian Open this January.

"The energy of the court shifted to my side. I felt the momentum. I started releasing and relaxing through my shots a bit more," Djokovic said, pantomiming a backhand swing, "and going for it more, with more confidence. And he backed up a bit."

On the 10th point of the third set's opening game, Djokovic flubbed a backhand. But he then would not commit an unforced error the rest of the way in that set, compiling 19 winners in that span.

Whenever an answer was required, Djokovic found one.

After Khachanov wildly celebrated his best shot of the match a back-to-the-net 'tweener that drew a netted volley from Djokovic, who bowed his head by wind-milling his arms and shouting and yelling, the perfect response came next. Djokovic hit a 128 mph (206 kph) serve followed by a forehand winner, and a 130 mph (209 kph) serve followed by a drop shot winner to take that game, then pointed his left index finger toward the azure sky. □

## LeBron James named honorary starter for 24 Hours of Le Mans



NBA basketball player LeBron James poses at the premiere of the Peacock film "Shooting Stars," Wednesday, May 31, 2023, at the Regency Village Theatre in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

By JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

**LE MANS, France (AP)** — NBA superstar LeBron James has been named the official starter for the centenary 24 Hours of Le Mans, which this year is welcoming American teams to the world's most prestigious endurance race.

The NBA's all-time leading scorer said he's honored to be included in the celebration of 100 years at Le Mans.

"There's nothing like seeing

and experiencing sports at their highest level," James said in a statement. "It's an honor for me to be part of this historic moment in motorsport and help celebrate the centenary of one of the biggest sporting events in the world."

"I look forward to kicking off this iconic race and watching its world-class drivers compete on Le Mans' global stage."

The twice-round-the-clock race begins Saturday.

The role of honorary starter

has since 1949 typically been given to a celebrity. Previous honorary starters include Rafael Nadal, Brad Pitt and Steve McQueen.

Track action at Le Mans resumes Wednesday and the 62-car field this year includes teams from the top class in the United States-based IMSA sports car series. The teams entered are owned by Roger Penske, Chip Ganassi and Action Express Racing, which is supported by NASCAR chairman Jim France. □

## PGA Tour and European tour agree to end LIV Golf feud

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

The PGA Tour ended its expensive fight with Saudi Arabia's golf venture and now is joining forces with it, making a stunning announcement Tuesday of a merger that creates a commercial operation with the Public Investment Fund and the European tour.

As part of the deal, the sides immediately are dropping all lawsuits involving LIV Golf.

From the golf side, still to be determined is how players like Brooks Koepka and Dustin Johnson can rejoin the PGA Tour after defecting last year for signing bonuses reported to be in the \$150 million range.

From the commercial side, the governor of Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund joins the PGA Tour board of directors and leads the new business venture as chairman, though the PGA Tour will have a majority stake.

News of the deal came as a surprise to many watchers of the lawsuits and Saudi Arabia's inroads into U.S. politics, sports and culture. "This is a huge development and obviously upends a world of golf, which has been perhaps more tradition-bound in the past," said Kristian Ulrichsen, a Middle East fellow at Houston's Baker Institute.

Under Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund has made a point of seeking out investments, like LIV, where it could shake up existing industries, Ulrichsen said.

"That's sort of one of their mantras, is to try to be disruptive and to take on the status quo," she said. "And in this case, they seem to have succeeded."

As for PGA Tour players, most were bewildered by the shocking turnaround. It didn't help that a news outlet broke the embargoed announcement before PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan could send a memo to the players. Most learned of the develop-



**Team champions David Puig, Sebastián Muñoz, Mito Pereira, Captain Joaquín Niemann of Torque GC and their caddies celebrate on stage with the team trophy during LIV Golf DC at the Trump National Golf Club in Washington Sunday, May 28, 2023, in Sterling, Virginia.**

Associated Press

ment on social media.

"I love finding out about morning news on Twitter," two-time major champion Collin Morikawa tweeted. Many were not happy. Wesley Bryan tweeted, "I feel betrayed, and will not ... be able to trust anyone within the corporate structure of the PGA Tour for a very long time."

Byeong Hun An added on Twitter: "I'm guessing the liv teams were struggling to get sponsors and pga tour couldn't turn down the money. Win-win for both tours but it's a big lose for who defended the tour for last two years."

The announcement comes a year after LIV Golf began. Monahan was at the Canadian Open that week and said pointedly about any player who joined LIV or was thinking about it: "Have you ever had to apologize for being a member of the PGA Tour?" Now they are partners, giving Saudi Arabia a commercial voice in golf's premier organization.

"They were going down their path, we were going down ours, and after a lot of introspection you realize all this tension in the game is not a good thing," Monahan said in a phone interview with The Associated

Press.

"We have a responsibility to our tour and to the game, and we felt like the time was right to have that conversation."

Monahan was headed to Toronto to meet with players at the Canadian Open, though most top players are not there. And while this likely will only lead to greater riches in golf, there still was explaining to do on why the tour would merge with a group that tried to take away some of the PGA Tour's best players and was seen as the latest example of "sportswashing."

"I understand the criticism," Monahan said. "For me, you take the information you have at the time and make decisions in the best interests. Things have changed. This was the right time to have this conversation."

The deal was in the works for the last seven weeks, when Monahan first met with Yasir Al-Rumayyan, governor of the Public Investment Fund. Players typically approve changes to the schedule and other competition matters. On this one, they were left out. "No one had word of this," Monahan said. "Our players expect us to operate in the best interests of the

tour."

Instead, he cited guidance from corporate members of the PGA Tour board.

Still, Monahan has his toughest work ahead of him.

He sought loyalty from his players against a league accused of taking part in sportswashing, an attempt by Saudi Arabia to shift focus away from its human rights abuses, such as the 2018 killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Now the very group that posed such a threat is now the PGA Tour's commercial partner.

Along the way, PGA Tour players also got rich. The tour raised prize money at elite events to \$20 million, the same purse for LIV's individual competition. The 2024 schedule has been reshaped for roughly 16 tournaments like that.

"In the short term, I expect a lot of questions and criticism," Monahan said. "In the long run, players who stayed with the PGA Tour will see they benefited in many ways."

The agreement combines the Public Investment Fund's golf-related commercial businesses and rights including LIV Golf with those of the PGA and European tours. The new

entity has not been named. Al-Rumayyan will join the board of the PGA Tour, which continues to operates its tournaments. The PIF will invest in the commercial venture.

"From the very beginning, the whole initiative was how to grow the game of golf," Al-Rumayyan said. "And I think what was achieved today was exactly that."

Augusta National and the Royal & Ancient welcomed the news because it ends the bitter feud. Augusta National said the deal "represents a positive development in bringing harmony to men's professional golf." R&A CEO Martin Slumbers said it would help golf "move forward in a collaborative, constructive and innovative fashion."

As for the new role of Greg Norman, Al-Rumayyan said only that Norman is LIV Golf's commissioner and details of his future role would be announced in the coming weeks.

Monahan's memo to players indicated a strong Saudi Arabian presence. He said PIF would make a financial investment to become a "premier corporate sponsor" of the PGA Tour, the European tour and other international tours.

The PIF initially will be the exclusive investor in the new entity and will have the exclusive right to further invest, including a right of first refusal on any capital that may be invested.

Al-Rumayyan has been spotted wearing a "MAGA" hat during LIV events at courses owned by former President Donald Trump.

Trump predicted last July that a merger was inevitable and said anyone not signing with the Saudi league would be losing out. He weighed in Tuesday and called it a "glamorous deal for the wonderful world of golf."

Monahan said the merger came together the last seven weeks, with PGA Tour board member Jimmy Dunne responsible for bringing together Monahan and Al-Rumayyan. □